



Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

PLANNING STATEMENT

Planning Application for installation of solar panels

at

**Princess Royal Hospital
Lewes Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 4EX**

On Behalf of:

University Hospitals Sussex Foundation Trust

Prepared by

**Batcheller Monkhouse
No.1 London Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN1 1DH**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is prepared on behalf of University Hospitals Sussex Foundation Trust in support of an application for the installation of solar panels at the Princess Royal Hospital, Lewes Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 4EX.
- 1.2 The statement includes a description of the site and its surroundings, relevant planning history, details of the proposed development, a summary of the planning policy context, and an appraisal of the scheme in the context of relevant planning considerations.
- 1.3 The application is supported by the following documents:
- Location Plan and Block Plans
 - Existing and Proposed Roof Plans and Elevations
 - Proposed Sections
 - Planning Statement

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS



Figure 1 Site Location Source Google Maps

- 2.1. Princess Royal Hospital is located on the south-eastern side of Haywards Heath in close proximity to the main A272 road and associated bypass. The hospital site has one main building plus a number of detached standalone buildings as well as multiple car parking areas. The proposals the subject of this application relate to the main building which dates from 1980's.
- 2.2. The area surrounding the hospital is largely residential with a 21st Century housing estate being present to the south of the hospital. To the west of the hospital site lies Southdowns Park which is a development of high quality residential apartments formed through the conversion of a former Victorian hospital building which is Grade II listed. As can be seen from Figure 2 below Southdowns Park sits on a lower topography than the hospital and there is also significant vegetation between the two sites. This results in limited direct visual connections between the hospital site and Southdowns Park as can be seen in the photographs enclosed in **Appendix 1**. To the north of the hospital site lies a range of 20 century housing as well as a hotel and petrol station. To the west lies the Haywards Heath bypass road beyond which is more residential development.
- 2.3. In addition to Southdowns Park there is also a Grade II listed Water Tower in the grounds of the hospital, see Figure 3 below.

Figure 2 Relationship of hospital site with Southdowns Park.

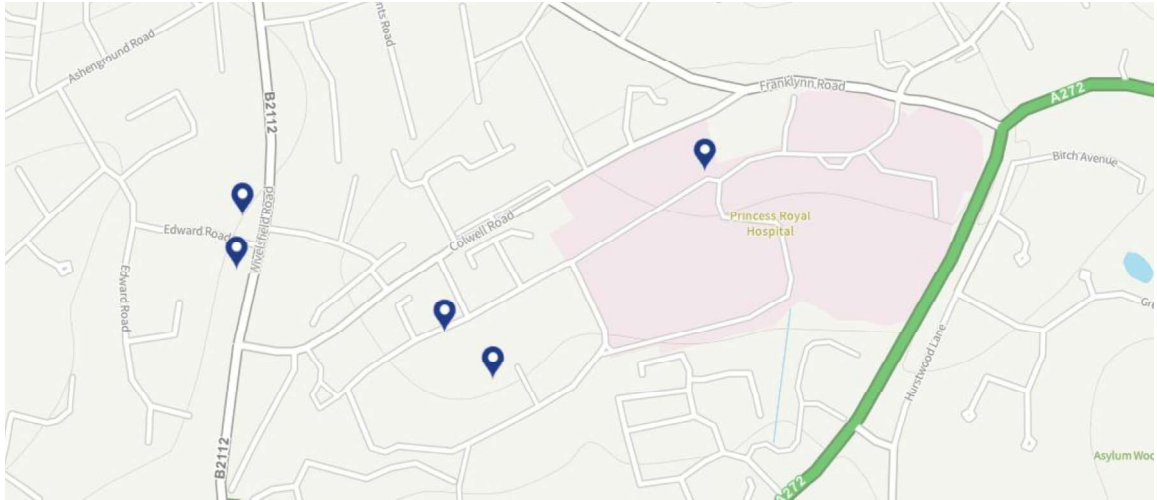


Figure 3 Heritage Assets Source: Historic England

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The site lies within the local planning authority area of Mid Sussex District Council. The Council's online planning records reveal an extensive planning history for the site the applications that are considered to be relevant to the current proposals are set out below:

Application	Proposal	Decision
DM/23/0098	Extension to the existing Hospital building to provide a new endoscopy unit for a range of high volume, low complexity endoscopy procedure	Approved 05 October 2023
DM/23/1850	Non Material Amendment to application DM/21/2108 for the raising of the height of the existing and proposed plant enclosure by 400mm and for the alignment of the modular buildings.	Approved 27 July 2023
DM/22/2021	Variation of conditions 5 and 6 relating to planning application DM/21/2108 - to allow for the retention of certain trees and removal of additional trees due to a high pressure water main found on site.	Approved 03 August 2022
DM/21/2108	New Urology Unit at Princess Royal Hospital	Approved 22 July 2021
DM/23/1028	The removal of 3 No. antennas, The installation of 3 No. antennas, Installation of 1 No. internal cabinet, Installation of 3 No. BOB units on a new interior cable ladder	Approved 02 June 2023

DM/23/1027	The removal of 3 No. antennas, The installation of 3 No. antennas, Installation of 1 No. internal cabinet, Installation of 3 No. BOB units on a new interior cable ladder	Approved 02 June 2023
DM/19/2114	Provision of roof ventilation equipment to serve Theatres 1-4 at the Princess Royal Hospital Building.	Approved 22 July 2019
DM/16/1130	The removal of 6no. existing antennas and replacement with 3no. new antennas painted to match the existing brickwork and the installation of 1no. small equipment cabinet inside the water tower.	Approved 27 April 2016
DM/16/1131	The removal of 6no. existing antennas and replacement with 3no. new antennas painted to match the existing brickwork and the installation of 1no. small equipment cabinet inside the water tower.	Approved 27 April 2016
14/03803/FUL	To remove two existing air conditioning chillers and their four external condensing units and replace them with two new high efficiency air cooled chillers on the same roof.	Approved 08 January 2015
09/01779/FUL	Installation of three panel antennas on pole-mounts with associated feeder cables.	Approved 13 August 2009

09/01780/LBC	Installation of three panel antennas on pole-mounts with associated feeder cables.	Approved 13 August 2009
05/02259/FUL	Minor amendments to approved scheme for new diagnostic treatment centre (HH.04.1039.FUL) to include amended single storey plant compound. Repositioned cycle shelter, new bin storage compound, roller shutter door to first floor plantroom, provision of 4no. additional flues to the roof (600mm in height) and other associated works.	Approved 23 December 2005
03/02285/FUL	Enhanced lighting to hospital site to provide safety and security for patients, staff and visitors using hospital grounds and facilities.	Approved 14 November 2003
03/01940/LBC	Installation of telecommunication cables in/ on 50mm galvanised steel trunking and tray from external entry point to equipment areas on 2nd and 3rd floors.	Approved 01 October 2003
03/00121/FUL	Additional roof mounted plant and ground level plant room to allow upgrade of sterilised supplies department, to meet health and safety standards	Approved 19 February 2003
01/02237/FUL	Replacement of 6 existing antennas with 6 new antennas, installation of ancillary equipment cabins within	Approved 11 December 2001

	internal second floor room and ancillary development thereto.	
01/02242/LBC	Replacement of 6 existing antennas with 6 new antennas, installation of ancillary equipment cabins within internal second floor room and ancillary development thereto.	Approved 11 December 2001
00/02072/LBC	To attach to water tower one cross polar antenna, one directional antenna and internal ancillary equipment	Approved 03 November 2000
00/02066/FUL	To attach to water tower one cross polar antenna, one directional antenna and internal ancillary equipment	Approved 03 November 2000
HH/309/99	Erection of Radio Aerial	Approved 10 December 1999
HH/039/99	Application for consent to retain the existing aerial systems on the water tower.	Approved 26 March 1999
HH/038/99	Application for consent to retain the existing aerial systems on the water tower.	Approved 26 March 1999
HH/151/96	Telecommunications facility comprising the installation of six wall mounted antennas and one 0.3m diameter radio dish and associated minor works.	Approved 16 August 1996
HH/153/96	Telecommunications facility comprising the installation of six	Approved 16 August 1996

	wall mounted antennas and one 0.3m diameter radio dish and associated minor works.	
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Table 1: Planning history relating to the application site

4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application seeks permission for the installation of solar panels on the southern sloping roof elevations of Princess Royal Hospital as well as on flat roof areas.
- 4.2 The extent of the solar panels can be seen in the submitted layouts and consists of solar panels that will be installed on both pitched and flat roofs on the southern side of the main hospital building. As demonstrated in the submitted sections where the solar panels are being installed on pitched roofs they will only very minimally extend from the plane of the roof such that they will be virtually indivisible from a side on view of the building. Similarly the solar panels to be installed on flat roofs will not have a significant height from the flat roof and will be viewed in the context of existing infrastructure on the hospital roof.

5 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Planning Policy Overview

5.1.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the site comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2022, Saved Policies of the Local Plan 2004 and the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan 2016. Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.1.2. This following section sets out the relevant Development Plan policies for this site and other material considerations which may be taken into account in the determination of the application.

5.2 Development Plan

5.2.1. Table 2 sets out the relevant policies of the District Plan

Policy	Summary
DP26	Character and Design
DP29	Noise, Air and Light Pollution
DP34	Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP39	Sustainable Design and Construction
DP40	Renewable Energy Schemes

Table 2: District Plan Policies

5.2.2. Table 3 sets out the relevant policies of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan

Policy	Summary
E8	Sustainable Development
E9	Design

Table 3: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

5.3 Other Material Considerations

5.3.1. The NPPF came into force in 2012 and was updated in 2024. It is the overarching government policy for England in relation to the assessment and determination of planning applications.

Paragraph	Summary
8	The Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development
10	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
131	Achieving well-designed places
167	Support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings
168	Significant weight to benefits associated with renewable energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future;
207	Detail proportionate to significance of heritage assets
215	Less than substantial harm to heritage assets

Table 4: NPPF Paragraphs

6 DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL

6.1 Principle of Development

6.1.1. The starting point for the consideration of applications is Section 38(6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which states that proposals should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy DP40 of the Local Plan is the key policy for the determination of this application. The policy provides support for renewable energy schemes provided that any adverse local impacts can be made acceptable. The policy then goes on to state three key areas of impacts that will be considered:

- a. Landscape Impact
- b. Ecological Impact
- c. Amenity Impact

6.1.2. Taking each of the above in turn in respect of landscape impact there are a number of points to be made. The hospital is set within an urban setting whereby the presence of infrastructure can be more readily assimilated into its surroundings. At the same time the built form of the hospital is of its own distinctive character in comparison to the residential development that surrounds the hospital and already has a level of infrastructure on its roof and as such the solar panels will not significantly alter the character of the hospital. As indicated above the solar panels are primarily focused on the southern elevations of the building. On the southern side of the hospital site there is a significant drop in site levels such that the hospital building is at a significantly higher elevation than the residential development to the south and as such direct views of the solar panels from areas to the south of the hospital will be limited and where there are views available of the affected roofs they will be longer distance views and therefore the solar panels will not appear as an overly dominant feature. Overall it is considered that the solar panels will be acceptable in landscape terms.

6.1.3. In terms of ecological impact the sloping roofs have been the subject of a preliminary bat roost assessment which concluded that there was no requirement for further emergence surveys subject to compliance with precautionary measures during the construction process.

6.1.4. In relation to amenity impacts it is considered that the solar panels are sufficiently distanced from surrounding residential properties to avoid adverse impacts by way of solar glare. This is particularly the case as the hospital sits on a higher elevation than residential properties to the south of the hospital site.

6.1.5. Overall it is considered that the proposed solar panels are in accordance with Policy DP40 and can be supported in principle.

6.2 Sustainable Development

6.2.1. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the constituent elements of sustainable development. The application to retain the existing use of land as garden extension including the small domestic shed would meet these in the following ways:

- i. **Economic** – The installation of solar panels will enable the Princess Royal Hospital to make significant cost savings on their electricity bills.
- ii. **Social** – The solar panels are essential infrastructure to enable the continued operation of this community facility.
- iii. **Environmental** – As set out above it is considered that the solar panels respect the character of the existing building and the wider area and will not cause any adverse amenity impacts.

6.3 Design

6.3.1 Policy DP26 of the District Plan states that all development including alterations and to existing buildings should be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. Policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan states that applicants must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site.

6.3.2 As set out above the hospital sits within an urban context and has existing infrastructure on its roof and as such it is considered that the solar panels will be in keeping with the existing character of the building which is of a utilitarian nature. In terms of the wider context the hospital complex reads as a standalone site separate from surrounding residential areas and the introduction of the solar panels will not significantly impact the relationship between the hospital site and surrounding areas.

- 6.3.3 By being sited on the southern elevations of the hospital the main front (northern) elevations of the hospital remain unimpeded of infrastructure and so the principal views of the hospital are not affected.

6.4 Impact upon Residential Amenity and General Amenity

- 6.4.1 Policy DP26 of the District Plan states that development proposals should not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents. Policy DP29 of the District Plan states that the environment will be protected from unacceptable levels of noise, light and air pollution.
- 6.4.2 As has been set out above it is considered that the solar panels and their associated infrastructure will be located a sufficient distance from surrounding residential properties to avoid adverse amenity impacts.

6.5 Impact on Heritage Assets

- 6.5.1. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where proposals will have less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset than this should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Policy DP34 of the District Plan states that development proposals will be required to protected listed buildings and their settings. Policy E9 of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan states that proposals affecting a listed building should preserve or enhance their special interest and/or distinctive character.
- 6.5.2. As referred to above there is a Grade II listed water tower within the grounds of the hospital and Southdowns Park is a Grade II listed building that lies to the west of the hospital site.

Southdowns Park

- 6.5.3. Southdowns Park is a complex of residential apartments formed through the conversion of a former Victorian hospital. The main building at Southdowns Park is Grade II listed (recorded as main block of St Francis Hospital) and the list entry for this building reads as follows:

Hospital, formerly purpose built lunatic asylum. 1859 by H E Kendall junior in a free Lombardo-Venetian style. Yellow brick with red brick decoration and slate roofs. Very long complex range of 57 bays, comprising a 7 bay centre

with 2 bay towers flanking it, and wings each of 24 bays including a slim terminal tower. The centre, and sections of the wings, are crowned by wide gables (the centre with an oculus), and the red brick cornice like the bands of the same material, is continuous. Windows are sashes with glazing bars, cambered headed to ground and third floor, round-headed between. The centre has all round-headed windows, those to ground floor with mullions and roundels, the towers have blind arcading above and below heavy cornices and end in pyramidal roofs. The first floor windows to centre have balconies in stone or cement. To either side of this block are further wings of 23 bays with simpler details. A single storey wing projects from the towers at each end. On the entrance facade a hammer-headed block comes forward with 3 main sections. The central one has round-headed windows and round-arched decoration. A triple feature encloses the modern glass doors and a painted carved tympanum. Broad flight of steps to door. Sashes are generally of two or four panes on this side. Entrance hall has elaborate fireplace and plasterwork over doors. Built as the Sussex Lunatic Asylum.

- 6.5.4. The above list entry concentrates on the significance of Southdowns Park in terms of its architectural form and does not indicate a great deal about its setting. As such further research was done in the form of a site visit to view the current relationship between Southdowns Park and the modern hospital complex as well as a review of historic maps.
- 6.5.5. A photographic schedule show the setting of Southdowns Park and its relationship with the modern hospital complex are enclosed at **Appendix 1**. These photographs indicate a number of points about the current setting of Southdowns Park and its relationship with the Princess Royal Hospital. Firstly, there is significant vegetation between the two sites which screen the majority of the hospital buildings from Southdowns Park. Secondly, the orientation of Southdowns Park is such that the principal views from the apartments will be to south east and not towards the hospital complex. Historical Maps (shown in Figures 4-7 below) show that overtime the open/landscape setting of the main building of Southdowns Park has been eroded overtime but there remains significant open areas to the south-west of Southdowns Park further emphasising this as the principal view/setting of the listed building at Southdowns Park.
- 6.5.6. The proposed solar panels are anticipated to largely be screened from views out of Southdowns Park by existing vegetation but where there are limited views available

(primarily from the top floors of Southdowns Park) the solar panels will be viewed in the context of existing infrastructure in the hospital complex including existing telecommunications infrastructure on the water tower which are positioned at a higher level than the solar panels will be. Overall therefore it is not considered that the solar panels will have a less than substantial impact on the setting of Southdowns Park. Pertinently there have been applications for much more significant proposals including standalone buildings in the hospital complex where the impact on Southdowns Park has not been an issue.



Figure 4 1879 Map Source National Library of Scotland



Figure 5 1896 Map Source National Library of Scotland

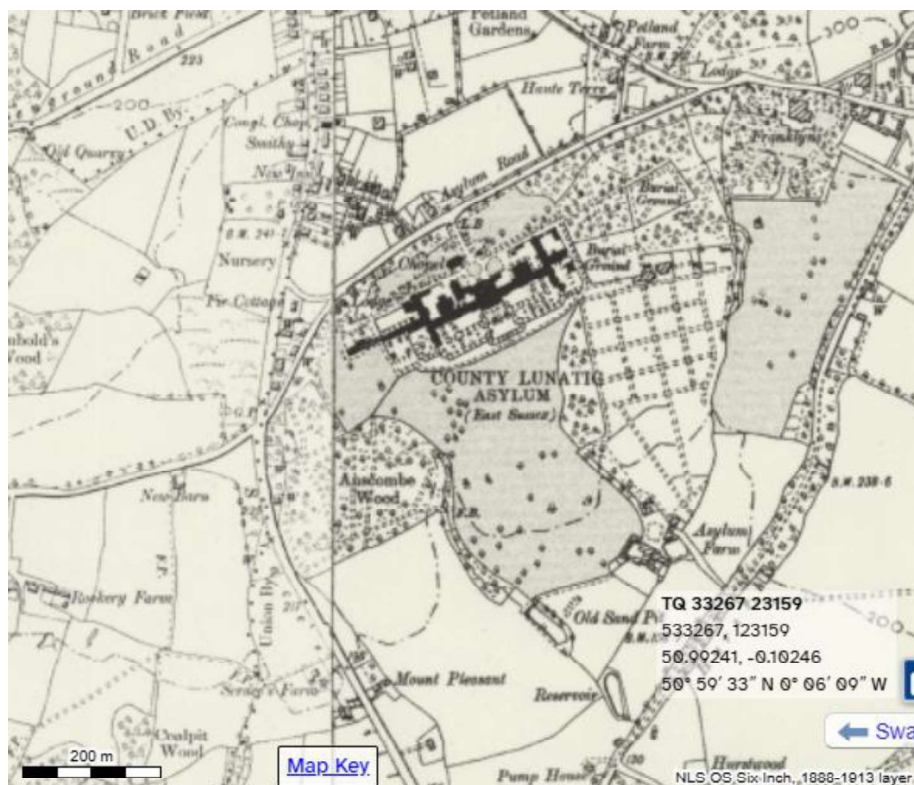


Figure 6 1913 Map Source National Library of Scotland



Figure 7 1959 Map Source National Library of Scotland

Water Tower

- 6.5.7. The Grade II water tower lies to the north west of the hospital building the subject of this application. The water tower dates from 1859 and originally served as the water tower for St Francis Hospital (now known as Southdowns Park). The tower currently houses a significant amount of telecommunications equipment and has been subject to multiple applications over the last few decades for the installation of replacement and additional telecommunications equipment.
- 6.5.8. Like Southdowns Park the wider setting of the water tower has significantly changed and it is now visually detached from Southdowns Park by intervening vegetation. A significant amount of built form has been permitted in the setting of the water tower including the Orthopaedic Centre immediately adjacent to the water tower which was approved in 2004 (ref: 04/01039/FUL).
- 6.5.9. In light of the above it is not considered that the proposed solar panels will affect the significance or setting of the water tower. This is particularly the case as the solar panels will be located on the southern elevations of the main hospital building and so there will be limited views of the solar panels from the water tower.

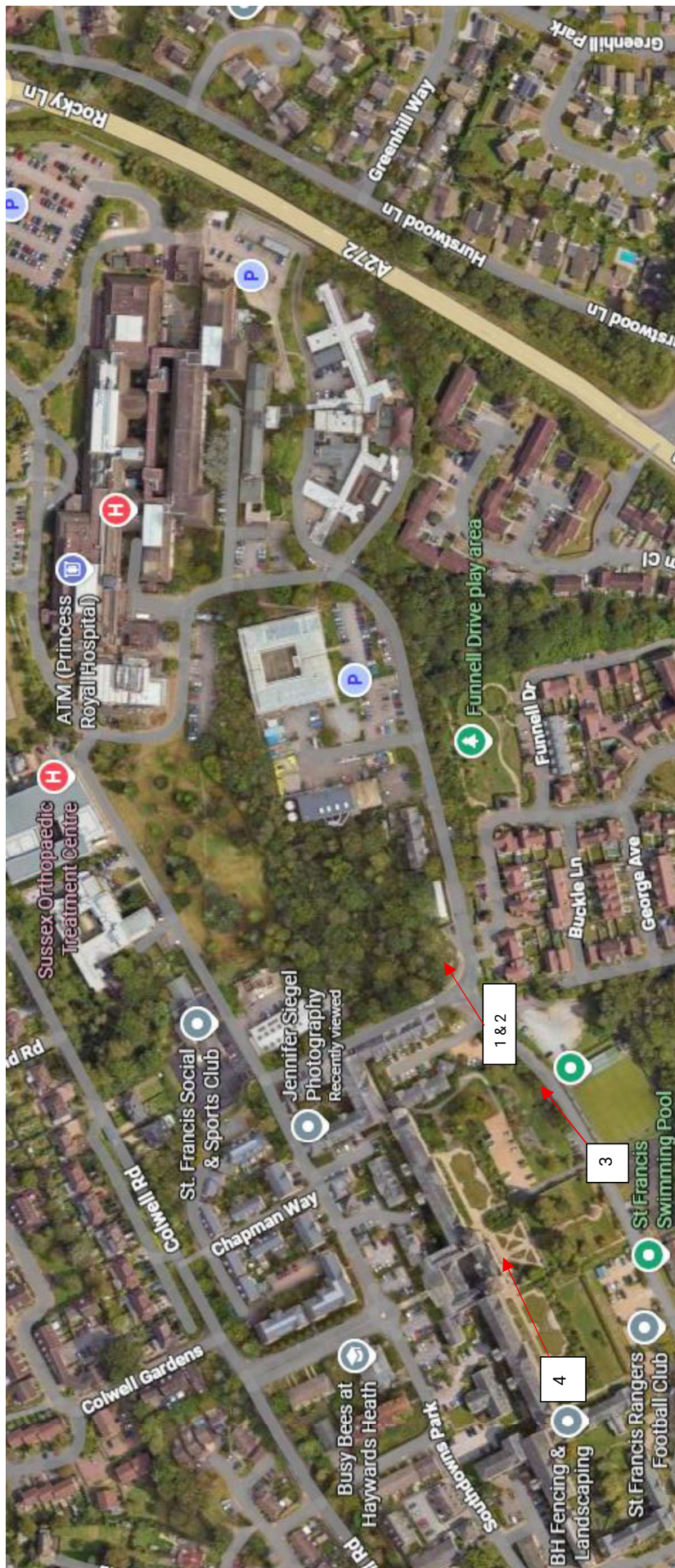
Overall Heritage Impact

6.5.10. For reasons set out above it is considered that the proposed solar panels will have a less than substantial impact on the setting and significance of Southdowns Park and the water tower. Inline with paragraph 215 of the NPPF the public benefits of the scheme have to be considered. In this respect there is clear public benefits in reducing the operational costs of the hospital through the power produced by the solar panels.

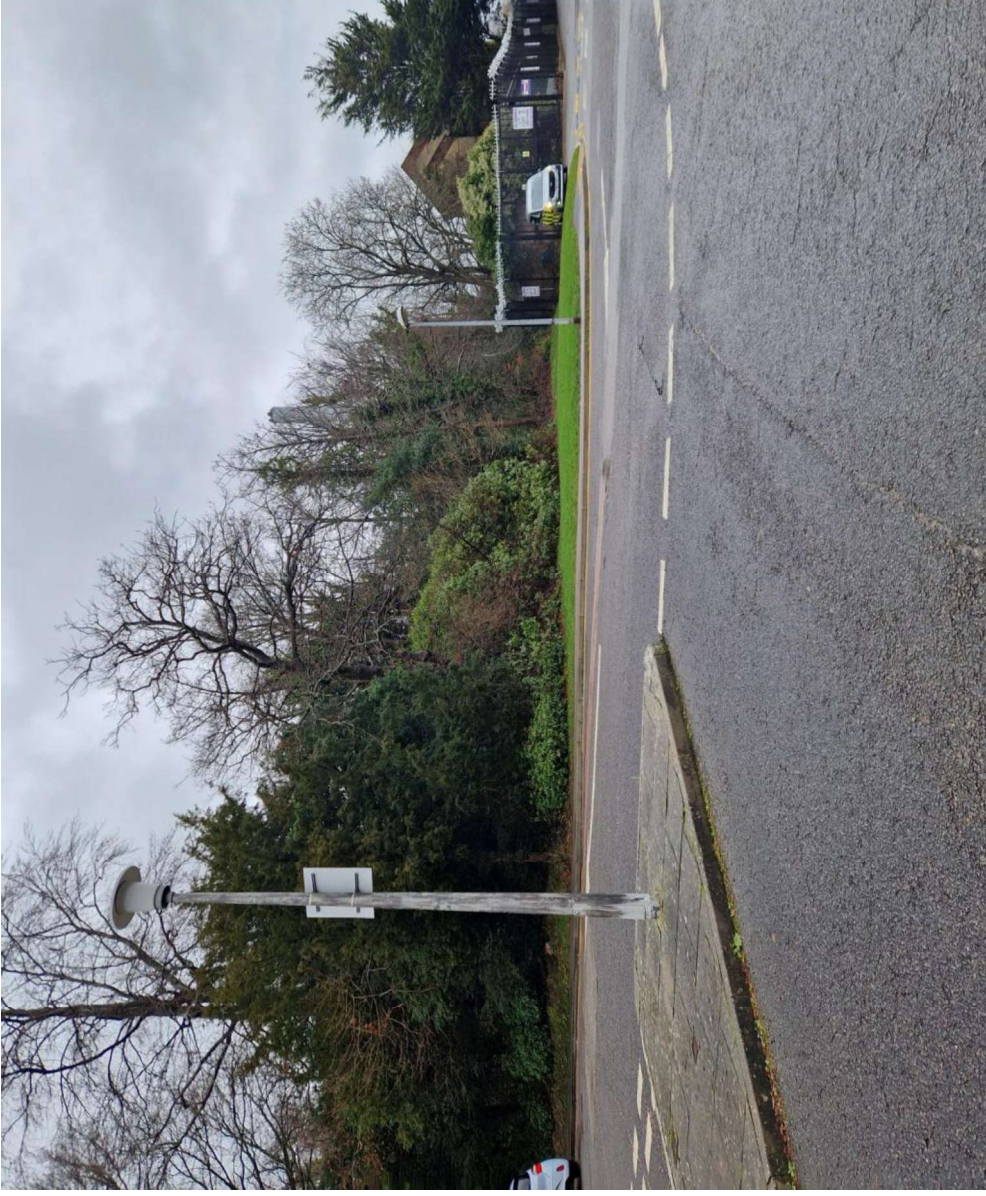
7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the installation of solar panels and associated infrastructure at the Princess Royal Hospital, Lewes Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 4EX.
- 7.2 The report demonstrates that the proposal performs the roles of sustainable development set out in the NPPF meaning that the presumption in favour of sustainable development can be applied.
- 7.3 The proposals are considered to comply with Policy DP40 of the district plan which supports schemes for renewable energy. The proposals are also considered to maintain the setting of nearby heritage assets and avoid adverse impacts on residential properties surrounding the hospital complex.
- 7.4 The proposal is therefore commended to Mid Sussex District Council for approval.

Appendix 1.



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

